

NH Tidal Energy Commission Meeting Minutes

NH Department of Environmental Services
Pease Field Office, Portsmouth, NH
April 11, 2008, 1:00 PM

Members:

Rep. Thomas Fargo, Co-Chair, City of Dover
Ken Baldwin, Co-Chair, UNH
Rep. Marcia Moody, Newmarket
Nancy Borden, Public Appointee
Joseph Broyles, Office of Energy & Planning
Joel Harrington, The Nature Conservancy
Michael Harrington, Public Utilities Commission
Sean McDermott, National Marine Fisheries Service
Jack Pare, Town of Newington
Otis Perry, Consumer Advocate Advisory Board
Christopher Waszczuk, NH Department of Transportation

Other Attendees:

Mike Johnson, National Marine Fisheries Service
Gail Pare, Great Bay Coast Watch
Christian Williams, NH Coastal Program

Summary:

Co-chair, Rep. Tom Fargo asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Co-chair Fargo then asked commission members for comments on the draft version of the February 15, 2008 meeting minutes. No comments were received. Co-chair Fargo then made a motion to approve the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved by members. The final version of the minutes will be posted on the commission's web page at http://des.nh.gov/Coastal/ocean_policy.html.

Co-chair Fargo then asked Ken Baldwin, Commission Co-chair and Chair of the Commission's Technical Feasibility, Cost & Benefits Analysis Subcommittee to report on the subcommittee's findings. Dr. Baldwin briefly described the physics of harnessing tidal power and the variables needed to calculate the amount of electrical generating capacity that exists under the Little Bay and General Sullivan bridges. He characterized his calculations as preliminary; but on a steady-state basis approximately 1.2 megawatts of power could be expected to be produced by installing hydrokinetic turbines under the bridges. A more detailed subcommittee will be forthcoming.

Co-Chair Fargo then asked for updates from each of the commission's subcommittees.

There was no new information presented by the Permitting Requirements Subcommittee and the Public and Business Community Outreach Subcommittee. Sean McDermott, chair of the Environmental and Wildlife Impact Assessment Subcommittee, stated that his attempts to convene a meeting of the subcommittee prior to today's Commission meeting were unsuccessful. He stated that he would meet with subcommittee members following today's meeting to schedule a meeting or conference call.

Co-chair Fargo then opened the meeting up for a roundtable discussion of items of interest to commission and non-commission members. Chris Waszczuk stated that the NHDOT is awaiting the record of decision by the Federal Highway Administration regarding the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Spaulding Turnpike Improvements. Proposed improvements include widening and rehabilitation of the Little Bay Bridges and rehabilitation of the General Sullivan Bridge. He stated that subsurface exploration in the channel beneath the General Sullivan Bridge is scheduled to begin this summer. NHDOT anticipates project construction to begin in 2010.

Jack Pare asked about the controlling depth of the channel beneath the General Sullivan Bridge. Specifically, would the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) allow equipment (e.g., a tidal energy turbine) in the main portion of the channel beneath the bridge? He agreed to contact the USCG regarding this issue.

The next commission meeting was scheduled for **Friday, May 16, 2008 at 1:00 PM at the NH Department of Environmental Services Pease Office in Portsmouth.**

Directions to the NHDES Pease Office will be provided on the commission's web page.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM